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Serial No. 10/805,859
Response to Official Action

In the Drawings

No amendments are made to the Drawings herein.

Remarks

By the foregoing Amendment, claims 1 and 7 are amended and new claims 8-16 have been added. Claims 1 and 7 are the independent claims. Entry of the Amendment and favorable consideration thereof are earnestly requested.

The Abstract was objected to because of the use of legal phraseology. Applicants have amended the Abstract to eliminate the objected to phraseology and respectfully request withdrawal of this objection.

Claim 7 was rejected as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and as being an improper process claim under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Claim 7 has been amended in a manner that Applicants submit traverse these rejections and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under section 112 and 101.

Claims 1-4 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Zoglman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,427,609) ("Zoglman") and also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Witengier (U.S. Patent No. 6,641,633). Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Zoglman or Witengier in view of WO 01/26783. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections in view of the Amendment above and the Remarks below.

Claim 1, as amended, claims an air dryer having, among other things, an intermediate cartridge that is arranged between a base member and a main cartridge, is removably connected to the base member by a third connector substantially identical to a second connector by which the main cartridge can be connected to the base member, is removably connected to the main cartridge by a fourth connector substantially identical to a first connector by which the base member can be connected to the main cartridge, and contains means for drying and possibly filtering and/or cleaning air

passing there through. Amended claim 7, similarly, claims an intermediate cartridge that has a third connector for removably connecting to a base member, which third connector is substantially identical to a second connector of a main cartridge; has a fourth connector for removably connecting to the main cartridge, which fourth connector is substantially identical to a first connector of the base member; and contains means for drying and possibly filtering and/or cleaning air passing there through.

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Zoglman nor Witengier anticipates the inventions embodied in claims 1 and 7 because neither discloses, teaches or suggests all the elements of either claim 1 or claim 7. Neither Zoglman et al. nor Witengier, for example, discloses, teaches or suggests having an intermediate cartridge that, *inter alia*, is removably connected to a base member by a third connector substantially identical to a second connector by which the main cartridge can be connected to the base member and is removably connected to the main cartridge by a fourth connector substantially identical to a first connector by which the base member can be connected to the main cartridge. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 7, and claims 2-6 that depend upon claim 1 and claims 8-16 that depend upon claim 7, are not anticipated by Zoglman or Witengier and Applicants request withdrawal of the anticipation rejections.

Moreover, Applicants submit that claims 1 and 7 would not have been obvious over either Zoglman or Witengier in view of WO 01/26783 because one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify either Zoglman or Witengier in view of WO 01/26783 to arrive at the inventions embodied in claims 1 and 7. WO 01/26783 was cited only for its teaching regarding adsorbents and does not disclose, teach or suggest the use of an intermediate cartridge. Applicants submit that Zoglman solves the problem of connecting parts of an air dryer differently from the present invention because Zoglman discloses an internal carrier 46 that has upper connector that is not even close to being substantially identical to the connector of bottom closure 28, and

further has a lower connector that is far from being substantially identical to the connector of canister 100. Unlike the present invention, it is clear that in Zoglman canister 100 could not be connected to bottom closure 28. Moreover, Zoglman criticizes having a vertical orientation of pieces of an air dryer that will increase the height of the overall device and restrict potential installation locations (col. 12, lines 13-16). Similarly, although Witengier shows a canister 22, a bottom cap 44, a top cap 42 and a separator plate 46, none of these parts features all the required connectors for an intermediate cartridge of the present inventions. Applicants submit that Zoglman and Witengier disclose the use of connectors to connect parts that is distinct from the use of the claimed connectors of the present invention and that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to try to modify Zoglman or Witengier to arrive at the present inventions. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Zoglman nor Witengier, alone or in combination with WO 01/26783 or with each other, render the inventions of amended claims 1 and 7 obvious and that therefore claims 2-6 that depend upon claim 1 and claims 8-16 that depend upon claim 7 are not rendered obvious by any combination of Zoglman, Witengier and WO 01/26783.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that all pending claims, namely claims 1-16, are patentable over the references of record, and Applicant earnestly solicits allowance of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

February 9, 2006



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